

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
MINUTES

Date: June 1, 2021
Time: 10:00am
Place: Via Zoom Meeting
Egremont

Present via zoom meeting were Chairman George McGurn, Vice-Chair Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen, Board member Mary Brazie. Others participating via zoom: Stephen Cohen, Chuck Ogden, Laura Allen, Jennifer Brown, Juliette Haas.

It was announced that the meeting is video and audio recorded.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the May 24 meeting were accepted with minor edits.

APPOINTMENTS:

The Board voted unanimously to re-appoint the following to the Council on Aging:

Bruce Bernstein
Georgette Kinney
Chet Delaney
Carolyn Palmucci
Linda Warner
Peg Muskrat as Administrative Assistant

NEW BUSINESS:

Jennifer Brown, French Park Committee, reported to the Board that with funds available to the Committee, about \$4500, the Committee would like to have the invasive Euonymus Alatus, aka Burning Bush removed in the park forests. The bush is taking over the forest floor, harboring ticks and killing natural pollinator plants. It is believed that the burning bush got its start at the chapel. In that area the bush has been cut but it keeps coming back. With the funds available Sari Hoy of Native Habitat Restoration has been consulted about preparing a plan for removing this invasive shrub. Funds can be obtained from the Department of Conservation and Recreation to conduct the removal process. The Board informed Jennifer that she needed a written proposal/contract in order to move forward. As the end of the fiscal year is approaching quickly, this proposal will need to be obtained within the next week or two in order to assure the funds can be carried over into the new year. The Board will revisit this topic at its June 8 meeting.

Resident Jon Caplan has proposed that the Board adopt a new town t-shirt design which would include a picture of the Baldwin Hill Elm Tree, which has been named by some as Elma. The current t-shirt was designed by Historical Commission member Barbara Kalish and is being sold to raise funds for the town's 250th birthday celebration. The Board felt it best to leave the current design in place.

The Board voted unanimously to adopt Notary Service Guidelines in response to the insurance carrier, MIIA, informing town's that they would not provide coverage to defend issues surrounding third party notarizations of things like deeds, mortgages, wills, living wills, trusts, codicils and deposits.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Town has received an acquisition notice from MassDOT announcing one permanent and one temporary easement at the South Egremont School property when the Route 23/41 reconstruction project is completed. It was noted that most, and possibly all residents along Route 23/41, received an acquisition notice. Vice-Chairman Vermeulen confirmed that her business in the village received the same letter though her easements were temporary.

With the clarification that all funds from the Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP) Planning Grant will be paid to Wesson & Simpson, though there is the need for in kind work from town employees and members of the MVP Committee, the Board voted unanimously to approve the application being filed by Juliette Haas. The Committee will not make a report to the Annual Town Meeting as it will need to obtain public input in later July, early August from residents.

COVID-19:

The Board adopted policy for the reopening of Town Hall as follows:

- ◆ As of 6/2/21 Town Hall will be opening to the public. For those who are not comfortable with coming in the building the locked boxes outside all Town Hall doors to leave payment or paperwork will remain in place and you can communicate via phone (528-0182) or email (tegremont@egremont-ma.gov).

- ◆ Entry to town hall will be on the east end, exit on the west end facing the parking lot. The exit door will remain locked to entry.

- ◆ Everyone entering Town Hall must wear a face covering.

- ◆ Everyone entering Town Hall must sign the login sheet outside of the entry.

- ◆ The Board reserves the right to close Town Hall again at any time and will follow all state guidance and protocols.

Employees will not be asked to wear lanyards as it has seemingly been deemed a violation of both the ADA laws and HIPPA laws.

BUDGET/TOWN MEETING:

It was agreed that there would be no cookies at town meeting. Attendees have been told they can bring their own food as it is the dinner hour.

Moderator Stephen Cohen will determine “when peoples eyes start to glaze over” if a second night will be needed. That date has been set at June 9.

Town Clerk Juliette Haas said that checkin will take place under a pop up tent for all attendees, they will be given a warrant, a voting card and 4 ballots for each of the secret ballot questions. She has 8 people to count and may ask firemen to help with counting votes from those sitting in their vehicles. No circles will be painted on the lawn area but a grid with squares for the purposes of designating counting areas will be painted. The Town Clerk plans to use two way radios to communicate with the counters. She is doing a dry run with her counting people on June 7.

The question of whether each ballot question has to be voted on separately following each particular article, or the ballots could be cast at one time after the four articles are debated, will be confirmed by the Moderator with Legal Counsel. Juliette will have one, clearly marked ballot box for each different ballot vote.

Final preparation plans can be discussed on June 8 at the 10am meeting.

FOLLOW UPS/UPDATES:

The Board is aware of no action having been taken on the broadband emergency backup agreement with Holyoke Gas and Electric company. The Board will also seek an update on the status of the pole locations on Brookvale Road.

SELECTBOARD ITEMS:

The next meeting will be June 8 at 10am and then again at 4:30pm just before the 5:00pm Annual Town Meeting. The Board will re-organize at the meeting on June 8th at 10am. There will be no meeting the week of June 15.

Vice-Chairman Vermeulen reported that the gardens at French Park are being utilized again this year by many of the same people who used them last year, as well 4 of them, being used for donation to the People's Pantry. There is a water issue which Greenagers would like to discuss with the Town. The current watering system is a holding tank that has no pressure and requires water to be carried. Greenagers is wondering if there is some other means of having water available. This will be discussed at the June 22 meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:16am.

Mary Brazie,
Office Administrator

minutes.21/jun1min

The recording of the minutes is on record at the Town Hall for 90 days. Anyone who wishes to may obtain a copy or listen to the recording at Town Hall. Attachments are on file at Town Hall.